

CERTAIN

(23)

PROPOSALS

Humbly Offered,

FOR THE

PRESERVATION & CONTINUANCE

Of the truly Reformed

PROTESTANT

RELIGION,

In these Three Kingdomes of *England,*
Scotland and Ireland.

By a Professor of the said Truly Reformed Protestant-Religion, and greatly sollicitous for the preservation of it.

Printed in the Year 1674.



THE
EPISTLE
TO THE
READER.

Christian Reader,

Vhen I seriously consider the present State of the truly Reformed Protestant Religion, as abroad throughout the whole European world, so particularly here at home in these three Kingdoms of England, Scotland and Ireland; my heart is sad within me, and my Spirit even fails to think what dark and dismal things are coming upon us; and therefore for the better easing of my own mind, and the declaring of a willingness at least, to do something (if possible) for the preventing of what I fear, I have adventured to publish this ensuing Treatise; which though there be not one word in it (that as I humbly conceive) can give any just ground of offence to any true Protestant, of whatsoever Rank or Quality, or of whatsoever Party, whether Conformist or Nonconformist; yet times of Trading for Books, as well as for other Commodities, being very dead and discouraging, I find none are willing to adventure upon the charge of printing this small Copy, else it had come out long since. At last therefore rather than it should lie stifled in the birth any longer, and my labour, and the end of it should be wholly lost, I have made hard shift thus to obstetricate and bring it forth at my own Charge. Money doth not at all abound with me, but the quite contrary; having divers both unavoidable and expensive cares upon me; yet such is the vehemency of my desire to use the utmost endeavour that lies in me, for the service of Christ, even beyond my poor capacity, and for the good of my Native Countrey, that I have devoted

this Impression (so much of it as turns not to any account towards my reimbursement) to be freely given to such as will but vouchsafe to read it, and when they have done, propagate it into good hands, though they should not be willing themselves to spare a small piece of Silver to purchase it. Perhaps the Lord will be pleased to accept and bless my Design therein, it may be he will smile upon it, and render it some way profitable to the end for which it is intended; in the hope whereof I rest: and however it succeeds, shall quiet my self in this, that I have done my endeavour in the sight of God and mine own Conscience, to serve the Generation wherein I live. And so having thus far expressed my care and solicitude for the next Age, and hereby made thee a witness of it, I subscribe my self what I truly am,

Thine and my Countreys most affectionately

earnest Well-wisher and Servant in Christ,

J. B.

Certain Proposals humbly offered for the Preservation and Continuance of the truly Reformed Protestant Religion down to succeeding Ages.

How deplorable a case the truly Reformed Protestant Religion now is in, partly from the power and prevalence of Popery, Arminianism, Socinianism, Quakerism (an Hotch-potch of all the rest) and many other dangerous Errors and Superstitions; partly by reason of the Death of great numbers of the most Learned, Pious, Zealous, Faithful and Painful Ministers in these Kingdomes; partly from the want of a due care to provide such as may succeed them in after-Ages, by such a liberal Education of the Youth of the present Age, as might fit them for that Service; and lastly, by the general and universal Prophaneness that every where spreads it self among us: I say, how deplorable a case the said truly Reformed Protestant Religion is now in, by the means aforesaid, and some others that might be added, would fill up a huge Volume to declare: a Work which I shall not here undertake; but shall rather apply my self humbly to propound such wayes and means, as by the Blessing of God may revive and restore the said Protestant Religion out of that deplorable state in which it seems now to lie bleeding, as it were, to death, and in some places almost ready to give up the Ghost.

But among many Proposals which I had prepared, and intended to have offered, I have singled out only these three, viz.

First, That an hearty Union, at least, in Love and Affection, between all Dissenting Parties in matters of Church-Government, that are otherwise sound and orthodox in the Doctrinals and holy Practicks of the right Reformed Protestant Religion, be heartily endeavoured.

Now this will be found principally among four sorts of Protestant-Professors in England; the Episcopal, Presbyterian, Congregational, and such of the moderate and sober-minded Anabaptists (so called) as differ only in the point of Infant-Baptism. I name the Episcopal-Protestant-Professor with the other three, because I know some of them to be men of eminent Learning and Piety, and in all the main Points of Protestantism very sound. Thousands (I doubt not) both Ministers and People

of the Church of England (so called) are of the same Judgment and Practice with our famously Holy and Learned Bishop *Usher*, published in his excellent Book, entitled, *The Sum and Substance of Christian Religion*. And why should not both *Presbyterians*, *Catharists* and *Congregational* men (so I had rather style them, than by the odious Name of *Independents*) have as real and hearty good will to these as to any other? Was not the Blood of Christ shed for them? Was not Heaven founded as much for them as for any? For such of them, I mean, as are under the same Spirit of *True Faith* and *Repentance*, which the Gospel requires in all that shall be saved. As for joyning with them in Matters of Worship, where *Conscience* is not satisfied, I by no means perswade any to it; *I cannot do it my self*: yet I truly love many that do, because I am bound in Charity to think they follow their Light, whilst I see them otherwise walking in an *uniform Tenour of Holiness*, both within doors and without, throughout the whole course of their Lives.

The other three, namely, the *Presbyterian*, *Catharist* and *Congregational*, if they do but keep close to their own declared Judgments on each side, that is, That none be admitted into their Churches, that in a true Gospel-sence are *ignorant* and *scandalous* (for by that, those that discern not the Lord's Body, are *ignorant*; and those that live not holily, are *scandalous*) I see no reason but (*salvo utriusque principio*) they may allow each others to be the true Churches of Christ. Both sides prove their Ministry to be from Christ, and to have the *Essentials* of an *Ordination* in it; one Party making the Formality of his *External Call* to consist in the Election of the People only, with a *solemn Dedication* to their Work by Fasting and Prayer; the other Party granting this to be requisite, but withal requiring the addition of *Hands imposed by a Presbytery*; which by the former is not esteemed necessary. And then for *Synods*; both Parties approve of them as useful and needful for *mutual and common advice*, though they differ in the Point of *Jurisdiction*, and the *proper seat and extent* of it.

Now why may not a *Brotherly Amity* well consist with these Differences, since on neither side any *essential thing* is wanting to render them true Ministers and Churches of Christ; and such as for the most part do otherwise agree in all matters of *Doctrine* and *Practice*? Nay, why may they not so far mutually agree, as to walk together in holy Fellowship one Church with another, as occasions serve, the Members of one Church communicating with the Members of the other? How sad is it, that where the way for a closure lies so *fair and easie*, good men should

should stand at so great a distance, for so long a time, each from other? What *bitterness*, what *angry reflections*, what *unbrotherly exasperations* are still found between these *differing Parties*? Whence comes it? Is it not from the *Devil*, the great *Author* and *Fomentor* of all *Divisions*? When shall the *Spirit of Meekness*, *Plain-heartedness* and *True Christian Love* put an end to these *Wranglings*? When shall it once be? Why should any, on one side or the other, remain under their own *Passions*, *Prejudices* and *inflexible Morosities*? Is there not great cause to suspect that *Carnal Policy*, *Self-opiniativeness*, *Pride of Heart*, or something worse, lies at the bottom? Is it possible, that where *Sincerity*, *Humility*, and such a *Gracious Disposition* as alwayes is accompanied more or less, with the *Sweet Spirit of Christ*, should dwell long in any that are true Members of him? Who can be said truly to have learned of him, that are not *like him* in the *Grace of Meekness* and *Lowliness of heart*? Sure if any thing in the world be just matter of *Wonder*, this is, that no *endeavours* hitherto us'd, no, nor no *severe Providences* from God himself, can reconcile *Brethren*, that have cost *Christ* so dear, are so dear to *Christ*, and ought to be so to each other! Do we not see how in *Stormy Times*, the poor *Sheep* and other *Cattel* will *run together*; how they get into their *Folds* and *Flocks*; how they herd themselves with a kind of *united force*; especially when the *worrying Dogs* and *Wolves* are abroad; do they not all then hasten to their *Shelters* and their *Shepherds*? And shall the very *Instinct* of *Nature* teach the *Brute Beasts* by this their *mutual Union* to defend themselves against present mischiefs, or approaching dangers, and shall not the most *Noble Principle* of *Grace*, called in the *Scripture*, the *Wisdom from on high*, much more teach men (good men!) to do the like? What is it would or could more *disanimate* the very worst and most potent *Enemies* the *truly Reformed Protestant Religion* hath, than to see the several *dissenting Parties* of sound Protestants, firmly to unite together, and by *mutual Allowances* in the few things wherein they differ, to strengthen each other in the *maintenance of the Faith* which they have received from *Christ* and his *Apostles*, and do on all hands think it their highest concernment to profess and bear testimony unto? This therefore may well challenge the first place in the *Methods* humbly offered for restoring the *aforsaid Protestant Religion* to a *flourishing state*.

Secondly, An *universal, constant and conscientious care*, and endeavour in all *Protestant Families* throughout these *Three Kingdoms*, diligently to instruct their *Children* and *Servants* in the *sound Principles* of the said *truly Reformed Protestant Religion*: The like care to be used by all

Schoolmasters, Tutors, Guardians, and others that have any charge of Souls under them; but most of all by Preaching Ministers, where-ever opportunity for such Work can be had. For the better accomplishment whereof, care is to be taken that such Catechisms may be made use of, as have no mixtures of Error in them, or are in any thing contrary to, or not agreeing with the Holy Scriptures; particularly in the Doctrine of the Christian Sabbath, and the Morality thereof; in which Calvin himself (though otherwise a very famous and sound Divine) was defective. The Mistake of whose opinion therein, hath had too much influence upon the Protestant Churches abroad) most of all in France and the seven United Provinces) as to the looseness of their Lives and whole Christian Profession. And here without offence let it be enquired, whether the strict observation of the Christian Sabbath, as a Divine Institution of Christ, here in England, hath not rendred the sincere Professors of this Nation more eminent in all practical holiness than others of Foreign Parts? A firm belief of the Morality of our Lords-Day-Rest, and a due observation of it accordingly, contains no small part of the very Power of Godliness in it, as well as the Form thereof. The truth is, the careful and reverent regard unto this Day, as well in mens secret Closets and private Families, as in Publick Assemblies, hath kept up a pure and warm Religion more in England than in any part of the world besides. Even to this day, who do we find to be the most savoury and spiritual in Discourse, the most exemplary and worthy of imitation in their Lives, but those that are most strict in an holy observation of this Day? That have turned away their feet from the Sabbath (as the Lord speaks by the Prophet, Isa. 58. 13.) from doing their pleasure on his holy day, and have called the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable, and have honoured him, not doing their own wayes, nor finding their own pleasure, nor speaking their own words: I say, who so much as these doth God himself delight in, and all good-men?

But if any say, that this concerns the Jews only, and those that keep the Seventh-day-Sabbath;

I answer, If those that are of that mind will but take pains to read what Bishop Usher, in his *Sum and Substance of Christian Religion*, hath written upon the translation of the Sabbath or time of rest, from the Seventh day to the First day of the Week, with the Reasons of it; as also what is published upon this Subject; not only formerly by many Learned Writers, but also of late by Mr. *Hughes of Plimouth*, Mr. *Baxter*, Mr. *Wells*, and others; but especially that most excellent Treatise upon it lately Printed, with this Title, *Excercises concerning the*
Name.

Name, Original, Nature, Use and Continuance of a day of Sacred Rest : together with an Assertion of the Divine institution of the Lord's Day, and Practical Directions for its due Observation. I say, whosoever will procure, and take pains to read over these Books, will soon find *sufficient reason* to believe, that the aforesaid words of the Prophet *Isaiah*, concerning the Sabbath, are *very aptly applicable* to the due Observers of our *Christian Sabbath*.

Now of all the spiritual employments of this Day, next to an attendance upon Publick Ordinances, in the *Solemn Assemblies* of the Saints; what hath been ever found to be more profitable, than when the Heads of Families, and others in their respective capacities, have by *Questions and Answers* in a *Catechetical way*, conveyed the *sound knowledge* of Christ and his great Gospel-Truths into the hearts of those committed to their care? *Reading* the Holy Scriptures also, *repeating* Sermons, *singing of Psalms*, and calling upon God in fervent Prayer, are all *Sabbath-day Exercises* in a Family: And *blessed* are those Families that are alwayes so employed. But the doing of this in an *Interlocutory way*, with Children and Servants, so as to make them *understand* what they hear and read, and be enriched with the well-grounded knowledge of it; *O this is excellent!* and one of the best means imaginable to preserve the *True Protestant Religion*, and to transmit it from Father to Son, even from one Generation to another. And because a clear and distinct knowledge of *Fundamental and Substantial Truths*, with such Texts of Scripture as do most contribute to the right understanding, confirmation and defence of them against all opposers whatsoever, will be a most precious Antidote, as well against all sorts of *Errors* as those of *Popery* it self, I humbly propound to the pious Readers hereof these following Considerations.

First, Let it be considered, whether it would not be time well spent, if some persons of *Wisdom and Ability*, whether engaged in any Church-Society, or otherwise, were appointed (or themselves did it by their own *voluntary* undertaking) to go from house to house at fit times and seasons, there to discourse the *weighty things* of Religion with their Friends and Neighbours, and so to manage this Work, as still to leave the persons they thus converse with *something more knowing* in the great things of Religion than formerly? Frequent Visits to this purpose, with *Line upon Line, here a little and there a little*, would turn to a much better account both with respect to *God's Glory*, the advancement of *Christ's Kingdom* in the world, and the enlightning of many precious souls with *saving knowledge*, than such vain Visits as are every where

where now in use. In some places, the Pastors and other Officers of the Churches may do *something* this way themselves, after the example of that holy Person, and worthy Servant of Christ, Mr. Henry Jesse, lately deceased; but where the hands of Church-Officers are full of other work, perhaps some others in their respective Congregations might be found and prevailed with, to do their utmost in it; at least, so far as might consist with their necessary employments in their respective trades and callings. This is *brave work*, and doubtless will be well rewarded by the God of Heaven, to the faithful and sincere-hearted Labourers in it. What doth the *gracious* and *industrious* Parent know, but that his continual dropping of heavenly words into his Children's ears; or the religious and loving Friend or Neighbour that doth the like with all that he converseth with (where a fair opportunity is offered) may be a means to work some blessed *Conviction*; yea, and a through *Conversion* too, in the hearts of those they thus discourse with? Christ may be preached as much and as *effectually* in *personal* and *interlocutory discourses*, as in set speeches, or *Sermons in a Pulpit*; nay, I know many instances can be given, where Discourses of this kind have done *more this way*, than all the Sermons that have been attended, though preached by men of the *greatest eminency*, for many years; as the Apostle sayes in another case, 1 Cor. 7. 16 *What knowest thou, O Wife, whether thou shalt save thy Husband? or how knowest thou, O man, whether thou shalt save thy Wife?* So say I; What knowest thou, O Parent, whether thou shalt save thy Child? or what knowest thou, O Christian, whether thou shalt save thy Friend or Neighbour, thy Brother or Sister by such spiritual and well managed Discourses as these? However, if it be but *well designed and endeavoured*, God takes it well, though the desired effect should not follow. Methinks that Passage in Dan. 12. 3 should greatly move to such an undertaking and earnest endeavour therein; *They that be wise (in the Margin, Teachers) shall shine as the brightness of the firmaments, and they that turn many to righteousness, as the Stars for ever and ever.*

Secondly, Let it be considered whether of all other, such as are Parents of Children ought not to be frequent at such work as this. I mean, not only upon Sabbath-Days and other Set Seasons for Religious Exercises, but in their daily and hourly converse among them; for is not this according to the Command of old given to the People of Israel, as a work that their *whole heart and soul* should be continually engaged in? What God required of them in this particular, is it not recorded for our instruction, in Deut. 6. from v. 4, to 7? *Hear, O Israel, thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul, and with all thy might; and these*

words

words which I command thee this day, shall be in thy heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently (Hebrew, thou shalt whet or sharpen them) unto thy Children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest in the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

Now if this be a Command that is always obliging, and to all Parents whatsoever (as doubtless it is) what then can we, in a well-grounded Charity, think of those Parents and Professors of Religion too, that order their affairs so, as very seldom, even almost next to never at all, are with their Children either Morning or Evening, much less all the day long, to perform these, so frequently to be repeated duties to them? Such *hurries* they are in, such *multitudes of business* and *employments* they continually take upon them; yea, so fill and crowd their heads and hearts therewith, that they neither have any mind, nor can be at leisure for these *serious matters*. Pretences indeed they make, of being commanded to be diligent in their Callings, and of a necessity lying on them with respect to providing for their Families, and such like *specious Arguments* from *abused Scriptures*; but whether these Arguments will quiet Conscience upon a dying Bed, I very much question; I know the care of providing for the Household, lies mostly upon the man, who is the Husband to the Wife, and the Father to the Children; and that it is the Mother's Duty, as well as the Father's, to instruct the Children, and to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; but will this excuse the Father from doing his part too? or will it satisfy him in clogging himself with so much other employment, and that in such an eager pursuit after the things of this world only, as either hinders him in the performance of it, or renders him unfit for it? As for his poor Children and Family thus neglected by him, is not the instructing them in the *One thing necessary*, and the saving of their precious souls, of far greater importance, than the getting of overmuch of this world for them?

But if this be not enough, especially in such times as these, when the true Protestant Religion is so much in its want, and Popery every where spreads so fast as it doth: I say, if this be not enough to convince and reform such Fathers of Children, as to this part of their Duty, I shall leave them to, and pity them for this their Sin and Folly; and in the mean while, will apply my self to the Mothers of those poor neglected Children, earnestly advising and persuading, that what is wanting on the Father's side, may be made up by them; and indeed, the Mothers of Children for the most part, have every where more opportunity for this

this work, as being more constantly at home and within doors, and to converse more with their Children than their Fathers can. They therefore, if God gives wisdom and skill to educate the Children which they have brought forth, or as Mothers-in-Law, are providentially intrusted with, may be much employed this way, and with the blessing of God upon their faithful endeavours herein, may become Mothers a second time unto them, in their spiritual Births: I have known some women that have been much honoured of God for their Holy Labours and Divine Successes of this kind, among their Children and their Childrens Children; and this, while their Husbands have been meer Sots; yea, sometimes Opposers and Hinderers of it. Instances we have in Scripture also that may greatly encourage unto this work. How came young Timothy to be so well instructed as (ἀπο βρεφους) from his Childhood or Infancy, as the Greek word imports, to have known the Holy Scriptures? 2 Tim. 3. 15. I say, how came this to pass, but by the Godly and Religious care and endeavours of those two holy women, his Grandmother Lois, and his Mother Eunice? as is recorded, 2 Tim. 1. 5.

What a pleasant Story doth Solomon tell us of himself, concerning his own education, when he was young? See what he sayes of the Instructions which he received both from his Father and his Mother.

First, From his Father; whose words he repeats throughout the whole fourth Chap. of Prov. some of which are these; Hear ye Children the instruction of a Father, and attend to know understanding; for I give you good Doctrine; forsake you not my Law; for I was my Father's son, tender and only beloved in the sight of my Mother; he taught me also, and said unto me, let thine heart retain my words, keep my Commandments and live; get wisdom, get understanding, forget it not, neither decline from the words of my mouth; forsake her not, and she shall preserve thee; love her, and she shall keep thee; wisdom is the principal thing, therefore get wisdom, and with all thy getting, get understanding; exalt her, and she shall promote thee; she shall bring thee to honour when thou dost embrace her: She shall give to thine head an Ornament of Grace, a Crown of Glory shall she deliver to thee. Hear, O my Son, and receive my Sayings, and the years of thy Life shall be many. I have taught thee in the way of wisdom, I have led thee in the right paths; when thou goest, thy steps shall not be streightened, and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble; take fast hold of Instruction, let her not go, keep her, for she is thy Life. These and many other, were the most excellent counsels to the end of the whole Chapter, which Solomon sayes his Father gave him; in all which, how earnest and affectionate was David in pressing those things upon his Son

Son Solomon; and how many Arguments doth he use to perswade him thereunto? But that which all *Fathers of Children* should do well here chiefly to mind, is, the *chief Matter* of that Instruction which *David* gives to his Son *Solomon*; namely, that he should *get wisdom* (that is, *Grace*) for so the word must be understood; and that he should be sure *to get this above all things else*, even above all other gettings whatsoever; and he gives the reason of it; for this, saith he, is the *principal thing*: as if he had said, this, O my Son *Solomon*, is of far greater worth and value than the *Kingdom and Crown* that thou art born unto; the *Scepter* that thou shalt ere long sway, and the *Throne* that thou shalt sit upon; more excellent, far more, than all the *Kingly Dignity and Honour* that thou art capable of, or canst enjoy in this world.

Hence it was, that *Solomon* himself, having learnt this Lesson from his Father, sets it forth in that manner that he doth, in *Prov. 3.* from v. 13. to 19. *Happy is the man* (saith he) *that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding*; for the *Merchandise of it is better than the Merchandise of Silver, and the gain thereof than fine Gold*; she is more precious than *Rubies, and all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto her*. Thus he goes on, saying much more concerning the inestimable value of that wisdom which his Father taught him to search after, and which himself afterwards so earnestly prayed for at his first coming to his Kingdom; as is recorded in *1 Kings 3.* from 6. to 13.

And as we have this pleasant Story from *Solomon's* own mouth, of his Father's instructing him when he was young, let us see what he sayes of his Mother's Instruction also, his Mother *Bathsheba*; as it is likewise recorded in *Prov. 31.* from 1. to 10. The words of King *Lemuel* (that is, *Solomon*) the Prophecy that his Mother taught him, *What, my Son! and what the Son of my womb! and what the Son of my Vows! Give not thy strength unto women, nor thy wayes to that which destroyeth Kings: It is not for Kings, O Lemuel, it is not for Kings to drink wine, nor for Princes strong Drink, lest they drink and forget the Law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted. Open thy mouth for the dumb, in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction; open thy mouth to judge righteously and plead the cause of the poor and needy. Behold here the counsel of a Mother to her Son, of a Queen-Mother to the King her Son: how happy were it if all the Kings of the Earth were thus instructed and did act accordingly?*

3ly, Since the H. Ghost insisteth so much upon the instruction of young ones, since he gives so strict commands to Parents concerning it, and to others that are in the room of Parents; and since he commendeth and

blesteth those that have been *faithful* in the discharge of this so necessary and great a Duty ; as he did *Abraham*, Gen. 18. 19. *Saying, Abraham shall surely become a great and a mighty Nation, and all the Nations of the Earth shall be blessed in him.* Why so ? For I know (saith he) *that he will command his Children and his Household after him; and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do justice and judgment.* I say, this also being duly considered, would it not be an excellent and *praise-worthy* practice, if *young persons* of their own accord, *Males with Males, and Females with Females*, would every where, all England over (as in some places I know they do) meet together, and that not only to pray with each other, and repeat Sermons (a practice very commendable and profitable) but also to confer together upon the *Fundamentals of Religion*, which they have read and learned out of some well-approved Catechism, with the Scriptures alledged for the proofs of them. Many of these, especially, if *under the age of sixteen years*, may meet together for such religious purposes, and be no *Conventicles*. What pity is it then that such Meetings of *young ones* are not every where in use, for mutual edification and instructions, which that they might thrive the better, would not some one *grave person* among them, to guide and assist them therein, very much *help* them in such a pious work ?

Were this and the like endeavours by Parents and others, as aforesaid, every where in common practice, what *blessed advantages* would from thence arise as to the propagating of the truly Reformed Protestant Religion ? Among which, would not this be one great one, above the rest, namely, the *facilitating* the work of the publick Ministry, both as to *Conviction, Conversion* and *Edification* too, whilst the respective Auditories up and down the Kingdom would be, as it were, *all bespangled and richly enamell'd* with well-instructed Families, and piously affected Auditors ? What *tractable, attentive* and *understanding* Hearers would the Congregations be replenished withal ? What *flourishing effects*, what *pleasant fruits* would the Labourers in Christ's Vineyards find their faithful Labours to be *crowned withal* ? Sure, if any way can possibly be thought of not only to *preserve* and *restore* the true Protestant Religion, but to put it into a *more prosperous estate* than ever it was known to be in in this Kingdom before ; *this is it.*

But though what hath been said hitherto, may through the blessing of God, if put in practice, prove good and effectual means to *raise* and *revive*, as it were, the truly Reformed Protestant Religion, from the present *swooning* and almost *dying* state in which it seems every where to be ; yet there is another thing no less important, to be most *intensely* minded

minded and laid to heart by all *considerate and sound Protestants*, and that is, what is like to become of the true *Protestant Religion* a few years hence, if no better course be taken for the continuance and support of it, than is any where now on foot?

As for *Popery*, that is kept up and maintained, not only by the *Powers and Potentates* of most Parts of *Christendom*, but by a continued *numerous succession* of *Learned* (though miserably blinded) men; as *Christ* sayes in another case, the men of that *dark Antichristian Kingdom* are *wiser in their generation than the Children of Light*; they are careful, from Age to Age, to find out and set apart the very *Flower* of their *Youth*, the most *pregnant, sin-witted Lads* that they can any where meet with throughout their *Popish Kingdoms*; upon these they spare no cost nor pains, to educate and bring them up in the *profoundest Learning* and *largest improvement* of their Parts, according to their respective *Genius's* and inclinations, to become serviceable in the propagation and defence of their *false Religion*. But alas! how little of this (in comparison) is done by the *Protestant Party all Europe over*? Insomuch that if *God* in his good providence doth not some way prevent it, and provide against it, the *Protestant Religion* ere long is not like to have many men of Parts and Learning able to defend it against its *subtil and inveterate Adversary* the Church of *Rome*: And how doth this glad the *Romish Catholick* at the very heart, and fill him with *hopes*, that in the next generation he shall carry all before him, and that, how zealous and successful soever some may now be, in *preaching, writing and disputing* against them; yet that the Children of them that do so, will be otherwise minded, or at least, through *Ignorance* and want of Learning, will not be able to maintain the *noble and righteous Cause*, which their Forefathers did, and that *irrefragably and invincibly*.

Now therefore since the case is thus, *O all you zealous, true-hearted, and sound Protestants throughout these Kingdoms* of England, Scotland, and Ireland, let me humbly propound an *Expedient* to you, that hath been upon my heart for some years; an *Expedient*, which I conceive is as *feasible as obvious*, if *God* give men hearts readily to comply with what I shall here suggest concerning it; which if they shall every where *unanimously and vigorously* set then selves about, I shall no way doubt, but that within the space of *fifteen or twenty years*, the truly Reformed *Protestant Religion* shall have no want of such as in due time, through the Blessing of *God*, shall become the *learned and unconquerable Defenders* of it against the greatest Champions the Church of *Rome* shall be able to produce.

(12.)
Now that which in order hereunto I have to propound, will briefly fall under two Propositions.

First, That assoon as may be, all the Children of such true-hearted and Religious Protestants as are scattered up & down in the three Kingdoms and the severall Schools in them, whether publick or private, and shall be found of pregnant parts, and well-grounded in *Grammar-learning*, be speedily committed to such Pious, Orthodox and Learned men as shall be found able and willing to instruct and educate them in *University-Studies*, and especially in those *Languages, Arts and Sciences* as may render them *able Disputants* and *good Divines*. I confine my self to the Children only of *true-hearted* and *Religious Protestants*, because I presume no others will make their Children so happy as to be so bred up.

Secondly, That from time to time, all true-hearted and Religious Protestants, as aforesaid (whether rich or poor) will set apart such of their Children as they shall find *most eminent* and *hopeful* for *natural Parts, Capacities* and *Dispositions*, unto this great service of the Gospel; and as they grow up, to send them to the *Grammar-Schools*, and so to higher Studies. Several Objections, perhaps, may here come in against these two Propositions; one from the *rich Protestants*, the other from the *poor*. From the rich: We have Estates to give our Children, say they, and thereupon intend some of them for the *Inns of Court*, and from thence, for higher *employments*; others we intend for *Merchants*, or such and such *gainful Trades*; for what encouragement is there to bring them up to that sort of Learning which may fit them for Services in the Church, when they are not like to get any preferment or employment without such *sinful Compliances* and time-serving *Conformities*, both in Doctrines and Manners, as may corrupt their Hearts, *debauch* their Consciences, and endanger their Souls for ever?

To these I answer; First, To those that design their Children to *high employments*, in case they bring them up to the aforesaid *great Service* of the Gospel, and (as *Hannah* did her Son *Samuel*) consecrate them to the Lord, and to his *Temple-work*, I conceive, they thereby advance them to *no mean employment*; but rather to as *noble* an one as any that can be named; it is no despicable work in the Apostles sence, to serve at the Altar, nor was it so in God's own account, when he glorified his Son *Jesus* to be a Priest, Heb. 5. 4, 5. *Solomon* was the greatest and the wisest King that ever the world had, and yet was a Preacher; so was *David* his Father, before him, a Preacher and a Prophet, Psal. 40.

9, 10. So also were the *Princes of Jehoshaphat*; of whom it is said, that *they taught the People in the Cities of Judah.*

And for those that say they have *Estates* to give to these their Children, by which they may be able to live without other preferments, especially those which come in by *Ecclesiastical Employments*; Well, admit it be so, will they not shew *their love* to Christ so much the more, in dedicating their *Children* and their *Estates* too, unto his Service? especially in such an Age as this, when the *right sort of Protestants* every where, for the most part, are *so poor*, that they cannot give so *liberal a maintenance* to the painful Preachers of the Gospel, as they desire and gladly would if they were able; and in case they bring up their Children to *Idleness*, because they have *Estates* to leave to them, and so put them into *no Calling or Employment* at all, what do they thereby do, but render them in a manner *wholly useless* both to *Church and State*? and which is worse, *expose* them to all manner of *Temptations and Dangers* which are wont to accompany an *idle course of Life*: and what *comfort* can *Parents* have in this, or their *Children* either? or what *accounts* will they both give hereof at the last day?

For those that differ from both the former, that is, neither intend their Children for high employments, nor yet to leave them *Estates* without Callings, but design them for *Merchandizing* and other *gainful Trades*, because they see no hopes of *Ecclesiastical preferments*, but upon the ill terms before mentioned: I shall only say thus much to them, if *one great cause* of the future decay of the *Protestant Religion* should be the want of such able men to defend it, as their Children in all probability might have proved to have been, had they been, in *pure love to Christ* and his Truth, *dedicated and brought up thereunto*; and so by that means, as much, if not more than any other, *Papery* should over-run this Land, what good will their *gainful Trades* do them in such a *dismal change*? and how little will God and their Country be beholding to them for this their *carnal policy* and *eager pursuit* after worldly advantages, with the loss of the *Gospel* and the *True Religion* which it holds forth?

To that which is said concerning the want of *encouragement* from *Ecclesiastical preferments*; if Christ himself be *worthy of credit*, and may be *believed* in what he sayes, such as go forth in his Name, to preach the everlasting Gospel, shall not want *subsistence nor encouragement* in that work; but shall be sure where they come, to *find welcome* as well for their *Persons*, as their *Doctrine*; and shall not need to take care either for *scrips for their journey*, or for *two coats*, or for *shoes*.

or for *slaves*, *no*, *nor* for *Gold* or *Silver*, or *Brass* in their *Purses*, Matth. 10. 9, 10.

Let this then suffice for answer to the *Objections* of the *rich Protestants*.

Now for those of the *Poor*; they also do make two *Objections*; one is, that they are totally unable to *maintain* their *Children*, or to bring them up in *Learning*, either in *Schools* or *Academies*, they have not wherewithal to do it. The other is, they are necessitated to train them up in some way even so soon as ever capable to get their *own living*, if not to be *helpful* to them their poor *Parents* also, and so cannot spare or allow them time for *such education* as aforesaid: were we able, say they, we would do it most *willingly*; but we cannot.

Now for the removal of this difficulty, I would become an *humble* and *earnest petitioner* to several sorts of *Rich Protestants* in these *Kingdoms*.

First, To all *rich Protestants* both *Males* and *Females*, that, though *rich*, yet by the *Providence* of *God*, some way or other, are *determined* to a *single life*, and have power to *dispose* of their *Estates* as seemeth good unto themselves.

Secondly, To all such *rich Protestants* in the married state, that have *no Issue* or *Kindred* to provide for, or at-least, such as have *no need* of them.

Thirdly, To all such *rich Protestants*, as, though blessed with *Children*, and may have other *Relations* to take care of, yet have so *plentiful an Estate*, that when all are well provided for, enough remains for other acts of *Piety* and *Charity*.

Fourthly, To all such *rich Protestants* as have *purposes* in their own hearts to *dispose* of the whole or any part of their *Estates* to some *good use* or other, but are not yet determined which way to do it, but would be glad to be *advised* how to improve what they have, so as *God* may be most *glorified*, and the *publick good* advanced in the *Places* and *Countries* where they live.

To these four sorts of *rich Protestants* I will now address my self, and among other acts of *Piety* which they may have thoughts of, would earnestly persuade to these which follow.

First, That such *pregnant Youths* as are above-described, who either have *no parents* alive, but are poor distressed *Orphans*, and in a manner altogether *friendless*, or are the *Children* of poor *Widows*, poor *Non-conforming Ministers*, or other poor *Protestants* fearing *God*, may be adopted or taken care of by them, in *Grammar Schools* and *Academies*,

for the ends aforesaid; and that in order hereunto, *Fees* in trust may be appointed (good and faithful men) to seek out for such as those, and to place them in good *Schools* and *Academies*, under such *Masters* and *Tutors* as shall be found most able and faithful in instructing such as shall be so committed to their care, in Learning and Piety; with this limitation, that in case any of the said Youths grow *debauched*, or within the compass of the times prefixed for them to be provided for, do fall into any *erroneous Opinions* or evil practices contrary or prejudicial to the true Reformed Protestant Religion, they shall thenceforth be cashiered, and enjoy no further benefit of the said Maintenance.

As for their *Academical Studies* after they leave the Grammar-Schools, I propound ten or twelve years at least to be spent in them; for this main reason, that they may have space sufficient, before they enter into the Ministry, to lay a good foundation of solid Learning, and be the more ripened in their *Parts* and *Abilities* both Natural and Acquired, for so great a work as a right Preaching of the Gospel is; for if they be of pregnant Wits, and good Students, they may within the space of the said ten or twelve years, be competently well acquainted with the Learned Languages and all those Liberal Sciences, the knowledge whereof is requisite to the study of Divinity; and in all which by daily study and practice, they will still become more and more expert, in which chief part of their studies, I mean Divinity, I conceive it would not be amiss, if they were particularly obliged by their Benefactors, to read such of the soundest and most ancient Fathers and best Schoolmen as comply most with the Doctrine of true Reformed Protestantism; as also, that they be further obliged to read such of the Modern Writers, both German and French, as are likewise of the same Judgment, but especially, that they be much versed in our English Divines not touched with Arminianism or other the like Errors; such as Jewel, both the Reynolds's, Perkins, Amesius, Usher, with the worthy Labours of Preston, Sibbs, Mr. Anthony Burges, Burroughs, Bridge, Mr. Isaac Ambrose, Allen, Owen, Greenhill, Mr. Sydrach Symphon, Symonds, Spurflow, Sedgwick, and many other of our Practical Divines that might be named; among which, I would by no means have omitted the excellent Works of Dr. Thomas Goodwin and Mr. Joseph Caryl; which Authors, and such like, when they have read over, and well digested, they will undoubtedly, with the Blessing of God upon their studies, become able men to preach the Gospel, and defend the true Protestant Religion against all Gainstayers whatsoever; yea, and

in all probability, will attain unto such an *Eloquence* and *fluency* of Speech, such a *sweetness* and *excellency* of knowledge in *Gospel-truths*, and such a *melting* and *moving* way of preaching, as will render them *blessed Instruments* of much spiritual good to their Hearers. O what a *joyful sound* all over the three Kingdoms would such *silver Trumpets* as these make! and what *golden Candlesticks* with *burning* and *shining Lights* in them would be set up where-ere they come!

This is the first most advantageous use (as I humbly conceive) and most of all tending to the Glory of God and the true publick Good, which such *rich Protestants*, as aforesaid, might make of the *Wealth* and *Abundance* which the Lord hath given them. If any Design in the world be worthy to be accounted a *Noble Design*, surely this is, thus to propagate the *truly Reformed Protestant Religion*; and especially at *such a time* as this is, to *revive* it, as it were, out of its own *Ashes*.

The founding of Hospitals for the relief of *aged* and *needy* people, is a good Act; and the setting the *poor* on work, is another; so is the binding out of poor Children to be Apprentices, and thereby be made able to live, and be useful in the world; but *this*, methinks, is a work *beyond* them all; and indeed, at this time, and in this Age, of greatest *necessity* and *importance*.

The consideration whereof, I suppose, was one of the chiefest Reasons that stirred up those *two most worthy Patriots*, Erasmus Smith and Thomas Foley Esq; (both yet alive) to erect their Famous Schools of *Grammar-Learning*, and devise such Statutes and Orders for the good Government and Education of the *numerous Youth* in them, as might most conduce unto this *very end*: three of which said Schools were Founded by the said *Erasmus Smith* Esq; some few years since in *Ireland*, with a Revenue amounting, in some short time, if well managed, to no less than *fourteen hundred pound* per annum (as I am assuredly informed) given for ever, for the maintenance and support of them. The other, very lately by the said *Thomas Foley* Esq; in *Worcestershire*, with an *ample Revenue* likewise for the upholding of it.

Rare Examples, and highly worthy of imitation, were there any to be found *so well minded*! Perhaps some may be found; we will hope the best: and should this little Treatise any way conduce thereunto, how should I think it a *Mercy* and *Honour*, that ever God put it into my heart to write it, and thereby occasion any to engage in so *blessed a Work*.

If it be objected, how can this be done, if men had never so good a mind to it? For are not places of Publick Education every where
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grown so corrupt, and debauched, that such as fear God dare not adventure their Children in them; for how *hopeful* soever they may be when they come thither; yet have not *too many* found by sad experience, the *power* of the *Temptations* they have there met with, even to their utter undoing?

I answer, That were it once resolved upon by the rich *Protestants* aforesaid, as they live scattered up and down the *Three Kingdoms*, and care taken by them to educate *such Youths* in every *City*, *Great Town*, and *Countrey*, and this known to be so; no doubt is to be made, but as *good Schoolmasters* would be found, to do their parts without the *Universities*; so *good Tutors* would seat themselves within the *Universities* to receive *Pupils* from all parts, that should be sent to them: Perhaps indeed they might not be admitted into the *Colledges* upon the account of *Nonconformity*; but yet perhaps they might be admitted to *inhabit* somewhere without the *Colledges*, as *Students* from all parts of the world do in the *Universities* abroad; as at *Leyden*, *Utrecht*, *Padua*, *Paris*, *Heidelberg*, and many others; by means whereof, they may be present at all *publick Disputations*, *Lectures*, and other *University-Exercises*, and bear their share in them, and in due time take their *Degrees* too (if not *enslaved* with *Oaths*, or otherwise hindered) and be as eminent in all parts of Learning, as any others; but if our *Universities* here at home, will not admit them to live among them, but *exterminate* and cast them out, they might be sent by their *Benefactors* to the *best Universities* abroad, particularly to *Cambridge* in *New-England*, who are wont to admit of *Strangers*, and that gladly too, from whatsever parts they come. *O happy day would that be, could we once see it!* if the several hundreds of such rich *Protestants*, as aforesaid, which might be found in these *Kingdoms*, would set apart some *Annual Revenue* to continue for ever, for so *brave a Service*; how many thousands of pounds yearly might be raised with ease, and disposed of *this way*? and how many hundreds of *hopeful young Branches* might thus continually from time to time, spring up to *succeed* the *old ones* that decay so fast, and die daily?

Methought it very much affected me many years since, when I saw at the *Jesuites-School* at *Antwerp*, a great number of the *Flower* of the Youth of the *City* and *Countrey* thereabout, to be trained up in a Religion so *wicked* and *Idolatrous* as the *Popish Religion* is; shall these men of so *false a Religion* be so sedulous and careful to raise up a succession of able instruments to maintain their *rotten Cause*, and not think the most *ripe-witted* and very *best-Parted* of their Children to be at all *disparaged*, but much *honoured* rather, to be so employed? And shall *Protestants*

stants be otherwise minded concerning their Children, and *less careful* for their Religion?

And though I judge this *first means* now named, viz. the education of *Youths* in *sound Religion* and *good Learning*, to be the speediest and very best that can be propounded for *retriving* and *advancing* of true *Protestantism*, yet I conceive *other methods* added thereunto, will yet give some *farther* good help therein: and therefore,

Secondly, I do farther humbly move that the aforesaid *rich Protestants* will make another *Annual Provision* to continue for ever, for the teaching of poor Children, both Males and Females, to *read the Scriptures*, and to learn some *good Catechismes*, containing *full and clear Instructions* in all the *principal* and *necessary Points* of the true *Reformed Protestant Religion*, and this in every place throughout these *Kingdoms*; especially in those *Cities, Great Towns* and *Villages*, where the poor do *most abound*, and where is *greatest Ignorance* and *Prophaneness*; and that *yearly Salaries* may be settled to be constantly and duly paid to *Schoolmasters* and *Schoolmistresses* to that end; and also that some *Reward* be given to *such* of the said Children (suppose a Bible, or such like) that are *quickest* in their Learning, and shall have first read over the *Bible*, and can give the *best account* of their *Catechism*; this would much encrease a good emulation among them, and by an *holycraft* engraft the knowledge of Christ in them.

Rewards likewise of this kind, or a certain sum of money allotted yearly to such *aged people* and *poor servants*, whether Males or Females, as cannot read but by their *own industry*, with such helps as they can get, do at last attain unto it, and can *make proof* thereof; and farther, that having learned thus to read, they do *dayly spend some time* in reading the Bible and some good *Catechismes*, would be money *well given*. Who knows what even *such a measure* of knowledge as many an one may get *this way*, may do? Who knows how many a *precious soul* may be saved by it? I am sure no better course can be taken to *spread abroad* the light of truth, the rules of holiness, and to *chase away Ignorance* and *Prophaneness*, where it abounds most, nor where people are *thus instructed*, would the *busy Papists* and their *Emissaries* be able to seduce *so many*, as 'tis justly to be feared they now do, and will do, especially in the *dark* and *remote parts* of these *Kingdoms*. And as in all places, thus to provide and raise up *choise Instruments*, and to instruct poor *ignorant* Creatures, whether *old* or *young*, in manner aforesaid, and for the ends aforesaid, would be an *excellent work*; so to do it there most of all, where is most need, will be most *praise-worthy*; as in *Wales* (espe-

(especially in *North-wales*, and such of the *Northern-Countries*, and other parts of *England*, as are most ignorant of God, and are least able, without the helps aforesaid, to train up their Children, either for publick Service, or at least, so far as to be able in their own Mother-Tongue, whether *Welch* or *English*, to read and know the Scriptures.

And because of all parts of His Majesties Dominions, the poor *Welch* Countries seem to be most destitute of the saving Knowledge of God, and the means of it, partly for want of Bibles, Catechisms and other good Books in the *Welch Tongue*; and partly for want of learned and good men, able to preach in that Language to them, I therefore humbly propound on behalf of the said *Welch* people, to all considerate persons, whether it would not be another most excellent work of Piety, Christian Charity and Pity to Souls, if the rich Protestants, living in those Countries, or elsewhere, should set apart an Annual Revenue for ever, for the maintaining of such good and able men to preach in the *Welch Tongue*: to such of them as understand no other; I mean, such peaceably-minded Nonconforming Ministers, as by reason of their Nonconformity, how peaceably-minded soever they be, cannot be capable of the publick maintenance. And as a farther help to the saving knowledge of Christ in those parts, I once more humbly propound, whether it would not be a worthy work for the aforesaid rich Protestants, to take care that every year, an Impression of *Welch* Bibles, and the worthy Labours of some of the chiefest of our soundest Practical Divines be likewise turned into the *Welch Tongue*, and printed, and given to such as shall be found most desirous of them, but not able to purchase them; and this curse to continue from year to year, till there be a sufficient store of Bibles, and other good Books in that Language, for the use of the said *Welch* Countries.

But methinks I hear some say, All the ways and means here propounded for the restoring of the true Protestant Religion, and the farther advancement of it, are very good; and no doubt is to be made, but blessed effects will come of it, were they speedily and vigorously prosecuted and put in practice; but who can perswade dissenting Brethren to such an amicable, sincere and hearty closure, as is desired? Who can perswade the Parents of Children every where, and others, that are the Governors of Families, or any way have the care of Souls, to lay sound knowledge into the minds of such as are committed to their charge, by Catechetical Instructions as hath been suggested? Who can perswade old and young to take pains in going from house to house, personally to converse each with other, for mutual and further edifica-

(20)
tion? Lastly, Who can perswade the *rich Protestants* every where, to lay out the *whole*, or any *part* of their Estates in the several wayes, and for the *pious* ends propounded? Alas! these are great things, and not to be hoped for in this Age, a much better Spirit must be found among all sorts of men, before such *Counsels* as these will take place.

I confess, 'tis true, the work is *difficult*, and not to be in the least attempted (much less is it like to be accomplished) by any *humane power*; but as difficult as it is, and seemingly, even impossible; yet methinks one way remains that may render it not only *feasible*, but easily *practicable* also, and expeditiously prosperous, and that is, the *power of God* put forth upon the hearts of men; he is the *Lord God Omnipotent*, reigning and ruling in, and over all his Creatures; *he doth whatsoever he pleaseth both in Heaven and in Earth*; if he say the word, and give out his command, even to the most obdurate, and *invincibly inflexible* to any thing that is good, they presently obey; he that can *cleave the Rocks* asunder, *melt the Mountains*, and turn the *whole Universe* upside down, what cannot he do upon the Spirit, the Mind and Soul of any one whatsoever, to *turn* and *encline* it which way he pleaseth?

Well then, this I suppose will be granted, that how *fierce* and *keen* forever *dissenting Brethren* have been, and still are, one towards another, how *morose*, *sharp*, *froward* forever, yet he can take off that *ferocity*, that *ferity* and *fierceness*, and put them into a *meek* and *bumble* temper; he that can make *Lions* to lie down with *Lambs*, and *Leopards* with *Kids*, sure can make the *Lambs* and the *Kids* to agree among themselves; he that can give that *wisdom* (where 'tis wanting) *which is from above*, and is *first pure*, then *peaceable*, *gentle*, and *easy* to be *entreated*; he can *quickly*, *fastly*, *firmly*, *sweetly* unite all his people, and so in like manner he can *perswade* to all the rest of the Matters now propounded.

If it be said, All this we know God can do; for who can hinder *Omnipotence* it self from doing whatever it hath a mind to? But what *ground* have we, or can we have to believe that he *will* do it?

I Answer, could we see but *one thing* generally practised by all *true-hearted sound Protestants*, throughout these three *Kingdoms*, viz. a *constant course of earnest and fervent Prayer* kept on foot. Could we see the *Spirit of Grace and Supplication* poured forth upon the *House of David*, and the *Inhabitants of our Gospel-Jerusalem*, for the obtaining of the Particulars afore-mentioned, by setting the *power of God* on work to effect them; I think there would be *good ground* to affirm, even without all peradventure, that he *will* do it, at least *so far*, as shall make for
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his own Glory, and the accomplishment of whatsoever good he intends for his people. And among other Arguments, I shall mention only these three, to perswade to a *Belief* thereof.

First, That he is, and alwayes will be *willing to hear* his Peoples prayers, and that in any thing they shall call upon him for (provided they pray aright, from right *Principles*, in a right *manner*, and to right *ends*) is evident from his *Nature*; he is a God of a most *merciful, sweet and gracious* disposition; the Scripture every where describes him so; a God full of *Bowels*; he hath his כחמיו, his *tenerrimos motus*, his tender mercies, Σπλῆνξιν ὀκτιμῶν, *Bowels of Mercy* and Commiserations. This Christ himself bears witness to, *Luke* 18. 7, 8. Where, after he had put forth a *Parable* from the *unjust Judge* to the poor oppressed Widow, and did it to the end, that men ought alwayes to pray, and not to faint; he adds these words, if the importunity of the poor widow with the unjust Judge, prevailed for justice, though he otherwise had no mind to do her Justice, shall not God (saith he) *avenge his own Elect, which cry night and day unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily.* He is so propense to Mercy, I, and to Justice too, that whenever his people cry unto him, he will shew them mercy in the very execution of his Justice upon his Enemies: But mark here, when will he do this? when they cry unto him, when they sigh and groan out their Complaints, as the poor *Israelites* did under their Oppressions in Egypt, and as *Daniel* and the three Children did in the fiery Furnace and the *Lion's Den*; The sighings of his Prisoners came up before him, *Psal.* 79. 11.

Secondly, It is likewise evident that it is, and must needs be so; namely, that God is, and alwayes will be *willing to hear* his Peoples prayers (when for matter and manner they pray aright, as was before hinted) from the *Engagement* which he is under, and hath freely laid upon himself, so to do; for hath he not promised, and that often, that *whensoever his people pray unto him, and seek him with their whole heart, they shall be sure to find him?* Nay, hath he not commanded, that they should call upon him in time of trouble? and then backed that command with a *special assurance* given, that when they do so cry, *he will give a gracious Audience?* *Psal.* 50. 15. compared with *Jer.* 29. 12, 13, 14. Multitudes of Passages in *Holy Writ* put this altogether out of question; among which I cannot omit to mention that most *emphatical* place in *Isa.* 65. 24. *It shall come to pass that before they call (the Prophet speaks it of the Lord's people) I will answer before they call! Mark that; God will be more ready to answer than they to call, more ready to hear than they.*

to speak; and this also, doth not our blessed Saviour more than once bear witness to concerning his Father; namely, That *whatsoever we ask of the Father in his Name, he will give it*, John 15. 16. & chap. 16. 23.

Thirdly, For farther confirmation unto this great and blessed Truth, that God is willing to hear his Peoples Prayers, hath he not left store of Instances upon record, that *de facto* he hath done so, and that from age to age, throughout all generations? Did he not hear the Groanings of the Children of Israel under their cruel Taskmasters in Egypt? Did he not hear the Cries of the poor captive Jews in Babylon, and at last bring them out from thence? Did not the Supplications of Ezra, Nehemiah, Daniel, in the three ninth Chapters of their several Books, come up to Heaven, and find acceptance, both for themselves, and all the rest of their distressed Brethren? Did not the Prayers of Mordecai and the perplexed Jews in Shushan, added to those of Queen Esther and her Maidens, prevail against proud Haman? Did not the Cries of Jonah, even out of the Belly of the Whale, find a passage through the surging waves? and prove so quick, even with their watry wings, that they came in unto God, even unto his holy Temple? as the expression is, *Jonah 2. 7.* Time would fail to relate the pleasant stories to this purpose, which stand upon record, not only in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, but also in all other Ecclesiastick Story.

Well then, the Premises considered what remains, but that I now call upon all true-hearted Protestants throughout these three Kingdoms, that they would take encouragement from hence, and set upon this praying-work with all possible speed and vigour; especially two things more being farther considered.

First, That God is as willing to hear Prayers now as ever, as kind, as merciful, and as much engaged to his People that truly fear him, and seek unto him, as ever, and will be as faithful in performing with his People as ever he was.

Secondly, That the state of the true Reformed Protestant Church and People of God never had more need of Prayer; never was at a lower ebb than now, never had more numerous and potent enemies to grapple with, since the times of Reformation came in among us.

These arguments one would think should have force enough in them, with all good and sound-hearted Christians, to put them upon this so needful, seasonable, and (if well managed) successful Duty of Prayer; a Duty, which hath done such wonders in all ages; the prevalency of which hath been attested by so rich experience in them that have made trial of it; a Duty which God himself calls us so much unto, takes

takes so much *delight* in, and hath encouraged by so many Promises. 'Tis true, the Devil is a great enemy to it, and evil-minded men oppose it what they can, because where this is much in use, it *greatly fights* against and keeps down the *Dominion* of Sin and Satan, not only in the hearts of *particular* men and women, but in whole *States* and *Kingdoms*.

If any say, it is indeed a Command, and so a *necessary* as well as a very *profitable* Duty, and God forbid but it should every where be much in practice, in every *Closet*, in every *Family*, in every *publick* and *solemn* Congregation, at the due times and seasons of it; but what do you mean when you call so earnestly upon the *Protestants* to pray? do you mean to perswade them to break the *King's Laws* by *Conventicling* and meeting together in great numbers for this Duty? 'tis some *extraordinary* kind of praying sure, you intend by this your so *zealous* exhortation to it. To which I answer.

It is indeed an *extraordinary Spirit of Prayer* which I long to see in all the Lord's people, there being such *extraordinary occasions* for it; and therefore besides the *secret*, *private* and *publick* Prayers before mentioned, in *Closets*, *Families*, and *solemn Congregations* in times of publick Worship; it is the *vehement desire* of my Soul, that they would once *every week* at least, *set apart* some time, more or less, as may consist with their several Callings and Employments, to *call upon God by earnest Prayer*, and this all over the Three Kingdoms, where-ever any true praying Saints can be found, that can conveniently meet together: which to do, and that with *mighy wrestlings*, as *Jacob* did, when in danger of his Brother *Esau*; I understand not how it is a breach of any of the King's Laws, unless the late Law against *Religious Meetings* be intended; but to grant such Meetings as these to be absolutely unlawful in themselves, or to be intended by that Law, I understand not any further, than that the number *beyond four* (besides the House-keeper) in such Meetings, may by that Law render them *criminal*: but where *offence* is taken at the number exceeding what the Law directs, why may not the good people of *England* make up their Meetings in that *very number which is allowed*, rather than not to meet at all; or so meet as to give *offence* unto the *Civil Magistrate*? Will not the number of forty persons, meeting in eight or ten *distinct companies*, be as *prevalent* with God, as if they all made up but *one Meeting*? and will not the *Gifts* and *Graces* of many more particular persons be thus *exercised*, than can be, if all these eight or ten Meetings were united together in one?

But

But now the next thing to be considered, is, what should be the *principal Subject Matter* of this *special* and *extraordinary* Meeting together in Prayer? This indeed to be unanimously agreed upon, and every where, as it were, *uno tenore*, with *one consent*, to be put up by all *praying Saints*, would be very *material*, and much conducting to the ends for which it is here humbly moved; an *universal Harmony* and *Agreement* in the things prayed for, must needs be *excellent*, and, from the very *agreement* that is in it, be the *more prevalent*; for doth not Christ himself intimate so much unto his Disciples, *Matth. 18. 19?* *If two of you shall agree (ἐὰν συμφωνήσωσιν) on earth, as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in Heaven.* If a right spiritual Prayer, wherewith the *Heart* and the *Mouth* of any one that prayes alone, do agree together, be a *Divine Melody*, sweet and delicious *Musick* in the ears of God, as himself tells us it is, *Cant. 2. 14. Let me hear thy voice* (saith he) *that is, her voice in prayer) for sweet is thy voice*; I say, if it be true thus of *one single* person praying alone, must it not needs be so much more when the hearts, minds and spirits of *divers* agree together, when met about that blessed work? Instances for this might be given; take one instead of many: It is that of the Prophet *Malachi*, chap. 3. 16. where we thus read, *Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another* (and also one with another in this Duty of Prayer) *and the Lord hearkned and heard*, observe the Passage; he *hearkned*, as men do to some rare *consort of Musick*; and so indeed the word *Symphony* used by our Saviour himself, in the place before-quoted, every one knows, that knows any thing of the *Greek Tongue*, doth properly signify an *Harmony of Voices*, or of *Instruments*, or both together: Thus *Novarinus* in locum; *Verbo Græco elegans subest Metaphora, συμφωνῆν, de Musico vocum concentu harmonicoq; sono dicitur, tanquam si diceretur, non minus gratam esse Deo concordem plurium orationem quam Concentus Musicus hominum auribus sit gratus.*

This then being a good reason for *such an agreement* in the matter of *such extraordinary* Prayer, as I humbly move may be *every where* set on foot, and constantly kept up, in the practice of it, till the *Scene* of things be so altered, that the *Harmony* of Prayer, may be put into a *new Tune* of Praises. Among other *Petitions* which it shall please the Lord by his *good Spirit* to frame in the hearts of all *praying Saints*, I conceive the *Matters mentioned* in the foregoing Discourse, will be very *pertinent* and *seasonable*, as *pursuant* to the ends designed by it; namely,

That

That all the Particulars before discoursed upon in this small *Treatise*, viz. a *sweet Harmony and Agreement* between all *dissenting Parties*, a conscientious performance of all the before-mentioned *Family-Duties*, may be every where set on foot ; with such other Methods as are propounded for the encrease of knowledge, and the establishing of the minds of people in the *truly Reformed Protestant Religion*, now so much struck at ; and especially, that God would please to stir up the *Rich Protestants* to the forementioned works of Piety and Charity, for the preservation of the said *truly Reformed Protestant Religion*, and the delivering of it down to the Generations that are to come.

If earnest Prayer be put up for this, and that *universally*, by all that know how to pray, throughout all these *Three Kingdoms*, namely, on behalf of these *Rich Protestants*, as well as in the other particulars beforementioned, who can tell, what a *choice publick Spirit* God may put into them ? He can make even the *Niggard bountiful*, and the *Churl liberal* ; he can open the *Hearts, Hands, Purses*, and possess the *minds* of thousands with the *excellent Service* they may do this way ; not only to the *present*, but the *Future Ages* : He can tell them, and set it home upon them, that they cannot possibly *honour the Lord with their substance more effectually* in this world, than to set it a running in the forementioned *Channels*, that by this means, that is, by propagating and delivering down the *true Protestant Religion* to all posterity, by such an use of their *Estates*, as aforesaid, will greatly turn unto their *account* both here and hereafter.

First here ; even in *this* life, and that *many* ways ; for will they not hereby, not only provide for many *poor Childrens* outward subsistence and livelihood in this world ? But which is a *greater thing*, give advantage to the *improvement* of the *Parts and Natural Gifts* of many a *Fine Wit* for publick Services, that otherwise would be in a manner *wholly lost*, and become *useless*, both in Church and State, for want of an *ingenious* education ? And, which is yet more, will they not keep up a *learned and able Ministry* ; and thereby, in time, make up the *lamented loss* of those many famous, *burning and shining Lights*, which of late years have been *extinguished*, and still are more and more extinguished every day ? and will they not by this means likewise, have the *Prayers of Multitudes continually sent up* to Heaven for them, that *Blessings* of all sorts may be poured down upon *them and theirs* ? Yea, and will not (as the *Apottle* sayes in much the like case, *2. Cor. 9. 11, 12, 13.*) this very thing, namely, this bountifulness and liberal distribution for so *brave a Service* unto the *Saints* (as well those that are not

yet born, as those that are) cause many *Thanksgivings* unto God?

Hereafter, at the great Tribunal of God ; how great a reward will it lay up for them, and how high a place will it mount them to in heaven ? all those *thousands* of men and women that shall come to a true knowledge of God, and the saving of their *precious Souls* ; in after-ages, as a consequence and effect of this their so pious disposal of their *wealth*, will they not pass for such as they have some way been instrumental in the saving of ? The *Conversions* wrought by those men, which they shall have brought up, and have given a liberal and holy Education to, will they not, in part, be ascribed to them ? The Rule in Philosophy is true here, *Causa causa est causa causati* ; in all noble acts, the first and remote Cause is to be acknowledged the spring and fountain of the next and more immediate causes and the good effects thereof.

When stout and valiant Champions which they instrumentally shall have thus raised up, not only for the propagating of the truly Reformed Protestant Religion, but for a strenuous defence of it also, against all Opposers whatsoever ; and when the minds of people, every where, shall thereby be so fixed and established, as to be able to stand against all stocks and storms, so that no Errors, no Powers, no Factions, Conspiracies, Subtilties, or combined interest of a Popish Party ; no Priests or Jesuites, or their Adherents shall be ever able to hinder the growth of true Protestantism ; much less exterminate it out of these Kingdomes : what matter of Joy will this be to all such Rich Protestants, as upon the consecrating of their Estates to the uses aforesaid, shall see such blessed effects and fruits thereof ; yea, and as was before said, what high reward too shall they be sure to be enriched with in the other world upon this account ?

But now on the contrary, how much otherwise will it be with all such rich Protestants ; especially such of them as pretend to a profession of Religion (and it may be, amongst the most zealous Protestants too) and yet have hearts so eaten into, yea so eaten up, and even gangren'd with Covetousness ; that,

First, They are so far from doing good to others with the abundance of wealth which they reckon themselves Masters of, that they live like slaves themselves to it, so penuriously, so sparingly, so pinchingly, that every wise observer of them cannot but wonder at their folly, and every good man pity it.

Secondly, When any opportunity is offered them for advancing any work of publick or private Charity, be the necessity and excellency thereof never so visible and apparent ; yet, they either find pitiful excuses, or
frivolous

frivolous Arguments against it; and so plainly reject it; or, it is a part with any thing, it is in so *small a pittance*, and with so much *pain and difficulty*, as if they were letting out so much of their *Heart-blood*.

I say concerning such *miserably-minded rich men* as these, how *lamentable* is their condition here? and how *much more lamentable* is it like to be hereafter? for the *evincing* of both which, it would be well for this sort of men frequently and with all *seriousness*, to read and consider these following *great Scripture-Truths* wherein they are deeply concerned, and for whose sake, after an *especial manner*, they seem to be made a part of the *Divine Oracle*, and to be left upon record.

First, The manifold *mischiefs, hurts and dangers* that this *wretched spirit* of theirs inevitably *hurries* them into, as is expressed at large in *Prov.* 28. 20, 22. and in *Eccles.* 5. from v. 10, to 18. compared with *Mat.* 13. 22. *1 Tim.* 6. 9, 10. *Jam.* 4. 4, 5. from v. 1, to 5.

Secondly, With as much *seriousness* and *frequency* to read and consider that passage, *1 John* 3. 17. *Who so hath this world's good, and seeth his Brother have need, and shutteth up his Bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?* And what advantage will he have by his *wealth*, if God hath no love for him, nor he for God and his people, in a right use and improvement of it?

Thirdly, and lastly, Let them seriously consider, that being but *Stewards* for God, and must give an account of their *Stewardship*; as is fully set forth in the *Parable* of the *rich man's Steward*; in *Luke* 16. Their account of all others, is like to be the *most dreadful*, and thereupon have they not need to use this, or the like *Letany*?

From an *excessive love* unto, *insatiable desires* after the world, with a *vehement and most eager pursuit* thereof; from the *sordid spirit* of the *vile person*, mentioned by the *Prophet Isaiah*, chap. 32. from v. 5. to 8. from the *God-provoking, soul-damning and detestable sin* of *Covetousness*, which is *Idolatry*; from an *exclusion out of Heaven*, and the *loss of eternal life*; from the *Treasures of wrath* heaped up against the day of *wrath*, and from the *everlasting burnings of unquenchable flames* among the *Devils in Hell*, which are the *Miser's portion*; Good Lord deliver us.

And now for a *Close* of all, I will end with this *earnest request* and desire, that all such, especially such *rich persons* as would be farther instructed and invited to the practice of what in this small *Treatise* is here humbly offered, would purchase to themselves, and carefully read over a *Book of small price*; but as *pithy* a Book, and as *argumentative* though in a plain style) as any I know. The Title of it is, *The Surest and*

(28)

safest Way of Thriving; Published by Mr. Tho. Gouge, Minister of the Gospel: And Printed for W. Rawlins at the Hand and Pen over against the Royal Exchange in Cornhil, 1673.

An Appendix.

THe consideration of two things, methinks, should very much affect all sound and true-hearted Protestants.

First, The great and continual decay of the old Stock of our Learned, Able, Orthodox, Faithful, Laborious, Protestant Divines. How fast do they drop away? how do they die daily? And how are the Flocks and People they were Shepherds unto, every where left destitute? To say nothing of those Famous Lights which were extinguished in the foregoing Age, viz. the reverend Mr. Greenhams, Hildershams, Reynolds, Dods, Clevers, Scudlers, Twisses, Byfields, Batemans, Rogerses, Capels, Boltons, Balls, Whartons, Wards, Bowleses, Perkinses, Amesfusses, Straughtons, Harrisses, Pinks, Wheatleys, Whites, Wilsons, and hundreds more. What sore blows in this kind have we received within this last twenty or five and twenty years? How many Marshalls, Burroughses, Wilsons, Goodwins, Carters, Sympsens, Bonds, Jeanses, Sydenhams, Palmers, Symonses, Whitakers, Arrowsmiths, Towngs, Vinefes, Gatakers, Ashes, Perns, Hills, Collinses, Beadles, Fullers, Cawdreys, &c? Yea, within this last fifteen years, how many Noltons, Taylors, Stronges, Slaters, Sedgewicks, Ruttons, Spurstons, Burgessses, Helmses, Hammonds? Yea, within one five years, how many Tuckneys, Stauntons, Reyners, Calamies, Newcomens, Greenhils, Bridges, Malories, Caryls, Nyes? And among others, how many young ones in the very Prime and Flower of their age, and heat of their work in the Lord's Vineyard, have been cropt off? How many Swinnocks, Sammses, Allens, Woods, Blakes, Pearses, Stevies, Loaders, Vennings, Janeways?

Secondly, The very few or almost none at all that have come up in the room of them nor (as things now stand) are like to do for the last fifteen years together, where have any been found (setting the Conformable Clergy aside) who have filled up the places of the forementioned, either in Life or Doctrine, in Studies or Preaching, or in such an elaborate care of Souls, as those deceased Worthies underwent, even unto the death?

Now of all others, should not you the sincere-hearted Professors of the said Reformed Protestant Religion, and the true lovers of it; you the Parents of Children, and you the Friends to other young Relations (especially,

pecially, (if *numerous*, or any way committed to your *care*,
solicitous for their souls welfare now in this next following Age, and
 down to *succeeding times*? Would you not be willing that your Chil-
 dren and your Childrens Children should be good *Protestants*? and in or-
 der thereunto, that *sound, able and faithful Protestant Divines* should
 from time to time be bred up, to make up the *loss* of such as die daily? That
young ones still should come up in the *room* of old ones, and so
 the *Faith*, which, as the Apostle saith (*Jude 3.*) *was once delivered*
unto the Saints, should be maintained in all future Generations? I sup-
 pose you would; and if so, what *better way* can you think of to pro-
 vide such, than what is suggested in this *little Treatise*? If you can
 find a *better way*, take it, and do your utmost in it; but do not *imagine*
 that you are no way *concerned*, and that the *care* of these matters lies
upon God only, as if his will were not, that in this, as in all things else,
 we should use all *lawful* and *good* means to attain the mercies we need,
 as well in *Soul-concerns*, as in those of the *Body*. I know God will have
 a *Church* in all ages, and a *select People* unto himself, *pickt out* and *cult'd*
 from the rest of the world; and I know and believe further, that not
 one of *his elect* shall miscarry or come short of heaven. The Scriptures
 of Truth are full for these things, and by one means or another the *all-*
wise and *all-powerful God* will effect them; and when *ordinary* means
 fail, he can and will make use of *extraordinary*. But this doth not exempt
 us from our duty and utmost *endeavour* to do our part; for in such a
neglect shall we not be found rather *Tempters* of God, than *Trusters* in
 him? 'Tis true, in former times, when *deep Popery* and the gross dark-
 ness of it had *thickned* the Heavens over us, and even quite darkned all
 the *European World*, God was pleased here and there to raise up *Instru-*
ments in an *extraordinary way* to *own, maintain* and *propagate* the Truth
 in *several Ages and Kingdoms*. Thus about the *thousandth year* after
 Christ, he was pleased to raise up one *Leuthericus Archbishop* of *Senes*
 in *France*, effectually to *own* and *maintain* the Truth in the point of
Transubstantiation, which he most *stoutly opposed*. And some time after
 him *Beringarius*, born at *Towres* in *France*, and constituted *Arch-Dea-*
con of *Angeirs*, defends the same Truth against *Transubstantiation* with
 great boldness; and therein was followed by the *French Protestants* cal-
 led *Hugonites*. Then about 350 years after, he raised up our famous
John Wickliff of *Merton-Colledge* in *Oxford*, who in the days of our
 King *Edward the Third*, and *Richard the Second*, so notably discovered
 the *Pope* to be *Antichrist*, and so strenuously asserted and maintained
 the *main Truths* (which we *Calvinists* now hold) that he was called

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the *Lamp of England*. Some time after riseth up our famous *Bradwardine*; and *John Hus* follows him in *Bohemia*; and *Jerom* of *Prague* follows *John Hus*. Then *Martin Luther* about 100 years after, is fetched out of the Colledge of *Augustin Monks* at *Erpbord* in *Germany*; him *Desiderius Erasmus* of *Rotterdam* (that *Prodigy of Wit and Learning*) defends. Next *Huldericus Zuinglius* of *Tigurum* among the *Switzers*. *Oecolampadius* of *Weinsperge* in *Germany*; *Urbanus Regius* in the Territories of *Montfort*; *Carlostadius* in *France*; *Wolfgangus Capito* in *Alsacia*; *Leo Jude* in *Helvetia*, *Fredericus Myconius* in *Franconia*; *John Diazus*, a *Spanish Priest*, and a great friend to *Martin Bucer*; *Gasper Cruciger* of *Lipseich* in *Misnia*; *Paulus Fagius*, born in the *Palatinate*; *Martin Bucer* aforesaid of *Selestadt* in *Germany*; *Gasper Hedio* of *Eilin* in the *Marquitate of Baden*; *George Prince of Anhalt*; *Justus Jonas* of *Wittenberg* in *Germany*; who having unwittingly eaten an *Onion* which his Father when sick of the *Plague*, had applied to his *Sore*, was miraculously preserved for the Service he was born unto; *Peter Martyr* of *Florence* in *Italy*; *Conrade Pelican* of *Rubeac* in *Swedeland*; *Bugenbagnus* of *Julinum* in *Pomerania*, *Philip Melancton* of *Bretta* in the lower *Palatinate*; *John Lasco* of a Noble Family in *Poland*, *Augustine Marlorat*, born in the *Dukedom of Lorrain*, an *Augustin Frier*; *Nicholas Amstdorffius*, born of Noble Parents in *Misnia*; *Wolfgangus Musculus*, born at *Pusa*, a little Town in *Litharingia*, and a *Benedictine Monk* in the *Palatinate*, *Gerardus Hyperius* at *Iper* in *Flanders*; *John Calvin* born at *Noviodunum* near the Borders of *Picardy*; *Paulus Vergerius*, *Pope Clement* the seventh his Legate in *Germany*; *Victorinus Strigelius* of *Kausbira* in *Switzerland*; *John Brentius* of *Wile* in *Swedeland*; *Peter Viretus*, born in the Countrey of the *Bernates*; *Stephen Zegedine*, born in the lower *Pannonia*; *Peter Ramus*, born in *France*; *Henry Bullinger*, born at *Bremagarta* in *Switzerland*; *Flavius Illiricus*, born at *Albona* in *Sclavonia*; *Josias Simlerus*, born in *Helvetia*; *Peter Boquin*, born in *Aquitane*; *Zacharius Ursin*, born in *Silesia*; *Abraham Bucholtzer*, born at *Scovaniun*; *John Wigandus*, born in *Mansfield*; *Martin Chemnitzius* born at *Brienza* in old *March*; *Rodolphus Gualter*, born in *Tigure*; *Gasper Olevian*, born in *Trevir*; *George Stronius*, born at *Eyiburg* in *Wettisaw*; *James Andreas*, born at *Waiblin* in *Wittenberg*; *Hieronymus Zanchius*, of a Noble Family in *Italy*; *Anthony Sadel*, born upon the Confines of *Savoy*, not far from *Geneva*; *Lambertus Danaus*, born at *Aurelia* in *France*; *Nicholas Hemingius*, born at *Loland* in *Denmark*; *Robert Rollock* and *John Knox*, both born in *Scotland*; *James Heerbrand*, born at *Noricum* in *Swevia*, for his early and late studies called *Suevica Notitia*,

Noctua, the *Svevian Night-crow*; *David Chytraeus*, born at *Ingelfing* in *Sweveland*; *Daniel Tossanus*, born at *Moumbelgard* in *Wirtemberg*; *Franciscus Junius*, and *Theodora Bezus*, born in *France*; *Amandus Polanus*, born in *Silesia*; *Andreas Gerardus*, born at *Hypeirs* in *Flanders*; *Arctius Benedictus*, born at *Berne* in *Switzerland*; *John Drusus*, born at *Aldnard* near the City of *Gaunt*; *James Geryneus*, born at *Berne* in *Helvetia*.

All these famous men (as they are reckoned up by *Melchior Adam*, *Fuller*, and others) as well those which are here named before *Luther*, as those that are reckoned up after him, and were born some time within the *Sixteenth Century*, were at first born in *Popery*, and in their younger times were trained up in it; but being all of them men of admirable *Natural Parts*, great *Students*, and singularly well learned, were touched with *Divine Powers*, enlightned and warmed with *Divine Beams of Truth*, and the Love of it, and thereupon forsook their *Popish Principles*, some in part only, some wholly and throughout, and were by extraordinary calls from God, set up as glorious *Lights* in the dark times and places when and where they lived; God himself plucking them, as it were, like *Firebrands out of the Fire*, with a purpose to make an honourable use of their *Parts*, *Learning* and *Grace*, against *Popery* and all manner of *Popish Sects and Orders*, as *Monks*, *Priests*, *Friers*, *Jesuits*, and their detestable *Doctrines*. And as he did this abroad, in the several *Countries* abovenamed, so here in our own *Nuive Countrey*; did he not in the same times, I mean in the same *16th Century* raise up many worthy men, famous also for their both *Parts* and *Learning*; and not only convert them after their *popish education*, but make eminent use of them as valiant *Champions*, *Confessors* and *Martyrs* for the *Truth*, viz. *John Colet* of *London*, *John Frith* of *Westram* in *Kent*, *William Tyndal*, *Thomas Bilney*, *John Rogers*, the *Proto-Martyr* in *Queen Maries* dayes; *Lawrence Sanders*, *John Bradford*, *John Hooper*, *Hugh Latimer*, *Nicholas Ridley*, *Thomas Cranmer*, *Rowland Taylor*, *John Philpot*, *John Jewel*, *John Reynolds*, *John Foxe*, and many more which might be added. I say, though God did this, and can do the like again in an extraordinary way; though he can open the eyes of those learned men in this our present age, and turn their hearts from the *Error* of their wayes, who are now deeply drenched in the *Doctrines of Pelagianism*, *Arminianism*, *Socinianism*, *Popery*, or whatsoever it is that borders upon any one of them; though he can find out an *Ambrose*, by his preaching to convert an *Austin*, with the help of the *Prayers* and *Tears* of his Mother *Monica*; though by one man's *Book* he can convert another, as he did

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Martin Bucer, Paulus Vergerius, Carlostadius, Leo Jude, Zuinglius his companion in Studies; *Fredericus Myconius, John Diazius a Spanish Priest; Urbanus Rhegius, Wolfgangus Musculus,* and many other *Famous* men in Germany, by reading of *Luthers* works. I say, though by these and many other wayes, he can raise up instruments even from men of the *present age*, and now in the very *Prime* and *Flower* of their *Parts* and *Learning*, cause them to return to *sound Doctrine* (whatever their present *Errors* may be) and *strenuously* to maintain it against *Pope-ry* and other *prevailing corruptions* in *Doctrine* or otherwise: Yet no man in his *right senses* will deny but that it is every *good Protestants* duty, in his *place* and *calling*, and as *opportunity* may be providentially given to him, or taken by him, to do his *utmost* for providing a *standing* and *alwayes succeeding Ministry* in the *usual* and *ordinary* way of *Education* of *hopeful Youths* in *Schools of Learning*, which is the thing that in this *finall Treatise* I principally press unto. And therefore to conclude all, since the *Scriptures* both of the *Old* and *New Testament* declare it to be a most *blessed thing* to *convert Souls*, and to bring in sinners to *Christ's Fold*, as is evident by comparing *Dan. 12. 3.* with *Luke 1. 14, 18. Eph. 3. 7, 8.* with many other pregnant *Texts* that might be added to the same purpose; I *Query*,

1. Whether the *Work* of the *Ministry*, where it is *faithfully* and *sincerely* discharged by *able, orthodox* and *painful Labourers* in *Christ's Vinyard*, and is accompanied with an *answerable success*, or at least finds a *gracious acceptance* with *Christ*, be not a *very honourable*, and (to all *considerate good men*) a *very desirable* employment? and whether those *Parents* and their *Children* that *undervalue, despise* and *scorn* it. as a *mean* and *contemptible* course of *Life*, may not well expect to be *scorned* of *God*, and for ever to be *rejected* by him?

2. Although the *Ministry* and the *work* thereof be so *honourable* an employment, as willingly to be undertaken and *delighted* in by such as the *Lord* inclines unto it and *qualifies* for it; yet whether they ought not to be *encouraged* and *rewarded* for their *faithful* and *painful Labours* therein, even to the *utmost power* and *ability* of those that sit under them, and have the *benefit* thereof? For doth not *Christ* himself say, *The Labourer is worthy of his hire*, *Luke 10. 7.* and the *Workman of his Meat*, *Mat. 10. 10.* and this, though he be otherwise *rich*, and hath no need? And much more then must it not needs be true of all such *faithful* and *painful Ministers*, as having *Wives, Children* and *Families* to maintain, have nothing else to live upon but what comes in *this way*? Let all that are concerned herein, read and consider well 1 *Cor.*

9. 13, 14. Do ye not know that they which minister about holy things, live of the things of the Temple? and they that wait at the Altar, are partakers with the Altar? even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel. And that in 1 Tim. 5. 17. Let the Elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour (διπλὴς τιμῆς, double reward) especially they who labour in Word and Doctrine.

3. But when and where worthy and able men are found, that with the peace of their own Consciences, cannot be capable of publick maintenance through their Nonconformity in matters Ecclesiastical; and the well-minded Protestant-Party every where, by persecutions, are (for the most part) so far impoverished, ruined and undone, that they are not able to give a livelihood to such as preach unto them; would it not be a worthy work, and exceedingly well pleasing unto God, if such rich ones among them, as are yet left able to do it, would take care so far to minister to them, and allow them such a maintenance as might encourage them in their work, in the midst of all that opposition which they meet with from unreasonable and ill-minded men?

4. Whether all such rich Protestants as are mentioned in the foregoing Treatise, that have Sons of their own, of pregnant Parts, apt to learn, and by perswasions of them their Parents, would easily be inclined to the Service of Christ in the aforesaid glorious work of the Ministry, or in case they have no such Sons of their own, yet would please to adopt such as are in the said Treatise already suggested, and not only bring them up to the said Service, in manner as is propounded; but settle a liberal maintenance upon them during their lives, at least, in case they continue sound in the Faith, painful in their Work, and holy in their Conversations: I say, whether those that shall do such a noble work as this, besides the giving proof of their Love to Christ, they will not by this means render the Children which they thus bring up &c dedicate to the Lord's work, and settle Estates upon them in consideration of it (whether they be their own Children or such as are adopted by them) I say, whether they will not render them doubly happy? First, in putting them into so honourable and heavenly an employment? Secondly, In delivering them from the Snares and Temptations they would otherwise be endangered by, if not thus provided for, upon account of their faithfulness and constancy in their work, whatsoever discouragements and troubles they may meet with for their works sake?

5. Whether it would not be one of the most Glorious works that some Ages have produced, if certain rich Protestants, amongst others the

aforementioned Acts of *Piety* humbly moved to be promoted by them, here in *Old England*, should agree together to settle a perpetual *liberal maintenance* upon the *University of Cambridge* in *New-England*, and so to endow it; that it might be a *standing* and *lasting Nursery* to all *succeeding Ages*; not only to train up such hopeful and *well-educated* Youths for the service of the *Gospel* there, as shall be born in that *Country*; but such also as shall be sent from *hence* for the same purpose, in due time to return hither *richly furnished* with sound Learning and abilities to do the like service here? Methinks 50 or 60 (if not 100) persons might easily be found in this *Kingdom of Old-England*, that might each of them give an *hundred pounds* a year for ever to the said *University* in *New-England*, for so *pious* and *renowned* a work, and thereby not only *perpetuate* and *embalm* their Names here, but prepare the more *abundant entrance* for themselves into the *Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ*, and so be the higher in happiness hereafter. For though I am far from that *Popish Opinion* of Merit (whether of *condignity* or *congruity*) and do not in the least think that any man whatsoever can *deserve* any thing at the hand of God for any good work or works that can be done by him; yet that every one receives according to his works, is no false Doctrine, if those Scriptures be true in 2 Cor. 5. 10. Rev. 14. 13. & 20. 12, 13.

6. Whether this small Treatise, if it shall be judged *useful* and *seasonable*, will not be so most of all by being *dispersed abroad* into many hands, and into those principally that it is *more particularly intended* for, as into the hands of all *dissenting* (though sound in the main) *true-hearted Professors*; into the hands of the *Parents* and *Governors* of *numerous Families*; into the hands of the several sorts of the *aforementioned rich Protestants*; into the hands of *all religiously affected young persons*, especially such as are under the age of sixteen years? And whether it would not be Money well laid out to *print so many Impressions*, and take care and pains to *disperse* them, as might replenish all the *aforesaid Parties* in these *Three Kingdoms* of *England, Scotland* and *Ireland*? Perhaps *some* of the things humbly proposed in the Treatise, may take with *some*, others with others; some may be prevailed with by it, to dedicate their *own Sons* to the Service of the *Sanctuary*; some to *adapt* others; some that cannot, or have no mind to do this, may settle *Country-Schools*, and give *yearly Stipends* for teaching *poor Children* to read, in *great* and *populous Towns*, and where is greatest *Ignorance* and *least Means* for Knowledge in the *remote* and *dark parts* of the *Kingdom*; particularly in the *Northern* and *Western Parts*, and all over *Wales*?

A Passage out of Mr. Increase Mather his Excellent Book, Entituled, The Mystery of Israel's Salvation.

And shall I tell you (yea from the Lord I will tell you) that the Prayers of the despicable ones, that know, and fear, and serve God, can do great things with him that doth *whatsoever he pleaseth in Heaven, and in Earth, and in all deep places.* Oh consider of it ! I remember Melancthon (that great and Learned Divine) saith, " he was much encouraged to hope that God would carry on the work of Reformation " in *Germany* (and the Lord did carry it on with great success in those " days) because he understood that there were many poor Godly women that were wont to meet together to pray, that the work of Reformation might go forward. Even so, if the Lord stir up the hearts of his poor Saints to favour the dust of *Zion*, and to shew it by earnest Prayer before him at all times ; surely the day will not be long before the Lord appear in his Glory to build up *Zion* ; for he will have regard unto the Prayer of the destitute, and will not despise their Prayer. Thus far he at the very close of his Book. The same say I here ; Fervent Prayer all *England* over among such as truly fear the Lord, and know how to pray aright, may possibly set hundreds on work to help on the ends of this small Treatise, and the Matters propounded in it.

FINIS.
